

HOTEL SAX CHICAGO

PR TEAM: Hotel Sax Chicago and Zapwater Communications (Chicago)

CAMPAIGN: Hotel Sax: Turning Everyday Joes into J-Los

DURATION: June-November 2007

BUDGET: about \$15,000



When the House of Blues Hotel in Chicago came under new management, the executives saw the chance to rebrand. With an upscale look and a twist on typical amenities, they could position the hotel among the top luxury hotels in the city, but avoid the stuffy connotations.

With its former ties to the music world, the renamed and redesigned hotel (with Zapwater Communications) decided to offer guests Celebrity-Rider Inspired Packages. "It was a natural fit... the idea of celebrities, entertainment, and music," says Adam Kaplan, director of marketing for Hotel Sax Chicago.

Hotel Sax gets celebrity inspired

STRATEGY

With more than \$25 million sunk into renovation, there was obvious news to share, but Zapwater also wanted to show how the Hotel Sax Chicago was doing things differently than other hotels.

The hotel had always prided itself on its efforts to get to know each of its guests and make them feel important, including the many celebrities that stayed in luxury suites, enjoying personally tailored service and catering. With its newest iteration, it wanted regular guests to indulge their inner-celebrity, and return to the hotel out of not just a desire for shelter, but also for lifestyle.

Zapwater designed four packages that were based on the styles and actual contract riders of celebrities. "We knew it would be a good press tool," says Susan Schreiber, publicist for Zapwater.

"We knew it would be a good press tool"

Susan Schreiber, publicist Zapwater Communications

TACTICS

For two nights, guests could "Rock Like the Red Hot Chili Peppers" (pictured below), have "Glam Nights like Jennifer Lopez," or "Move & Shake Like Ari Gold." The guest would enjoy VIP treatment through various perks, such as an in-suite personal stylist from Gucci or the use of a personal assistant.

The firm knew it would be a great marketing device. Following the introduction of the packages and an unveiling event, there was a major push to overhaul the packages page on the hotel Web site, which helped to increase marketing for the hotel's other packages.

The firm issued a press release pitching local and national lifestyle, hospitality, and trade publications. In November, the packages and hotel were featured on the "Sign of the Times" segment on *Nightline*, which wanted to show how even hotels were grabbing onto celebrity fixation and the desire to live that lifestyle.

RESULTS

The *Nightline* segment reached approximately 6 million viewers, and stories of the packages garnered the greatest amount of press the hotel had seen since its rebranding, receiving placements in *Time*, *Forbes Traveler*, and the *Chicago Tribune*, among others.

Calls regarding the celebrity-rider packages have led to bookings of more than 80 rooms (about \$14,000 in revenue) and many of the hotel's corporate clients have expressed interest in customizing "celebrity" packages of their clients, Schreiber says.

FUTURE

The hotel not only intends to continue the celebrity-rider packages, but plans to add to them further, Kaplan says.

They will ask celebrities that stay at the hotel to design their own packages, and a portion of the proceeds will be donated to the celebrities' charities of choice.

Jen Adams

PRWEEK'S VIEW

Rather than focusing on what many firms might see as the bottom-line objective of money, Zapwater zeroed in on the hotel's true desire – the longevity of customers' patronage – and designed the campaign accordingly. Playing off of a cultural shift rather than a fad, the firm was able to tap into the factors that might motivate the typical guest making a choice between upscale hotels.

Like the ever-changing roster of celebrities, the constant update of the different packages will pique both potential and current customers' interest, and the philanthropic element will have a similar effect on the celebrities staying at the hotel.



ALTAONE FEDERAL CREDIT

PR TEAM: AltaOne Federal Credit Union (Ridgecrest, CA) and Bouchard Communications Group (Roseville, CA)

CAMPAIGN: GuessTheAnswer

DURATION: August 1, 2007-February 9, 2008

BUDGET: \$170,993

AltaOne uses curiosity to create buzz about opening

STRATEGY

AltaOne knew that in order to make a bank opening pop, it needed something innovative.

"We didn't want to do something typical," says Kristy Garza, account executive at Bouchard.

So the agency created a can't-miss, 6-foot red question-mark statue to position around the area, as well as an accompanying Web site, to build curiosity.

TACTICS

Bouchard placed the statue at three locations in Bakersfield for a week at a time. The statue directed people to the interactive site, www.guesstheanswer.com, where residents received clues about what was coming and were able to submit guesses to win weekly prizes. It also streamed interviews with locals about what they believed was coming to Bakersfield.

The team sent question-mark cookies and advisories to local media. In addition, it sent four mailers to residents to build buzz, and an invitation was sent out four days before the opening.

Bouchard also had local country radio station KUZZ stream live at the opening to help promote.

RESULTS

More than 800 people attended the grand opening, where AltaOne signed up more than 40 new members. AltaOne opened 133 accounts in February.

Also, the Web site garnered more than 18,000 visits, with 200-plus guesses entered.

FUTURE

Bouchard and AltaOne continue to promote the Bakersfield location.

Telisha Bryan

EYE-FI

PR TEAM: Eye-Fi (Mountain View, CA) and Red Consultancy (San Francisco; London headquarters)

CAMPAIGN: Eye-Fi Launch

DURATION: June 2007-January 2008

BUDGET: \$150,000

Eye-Fi targets tech-savvy buyers with new product

STRATEGY

Red decided to build credibility and excitement for the unknown brand by promoting the product to early adopters and the gadget media. The agency planned to launch the new technology in a three-phased effort to maximize media effectiveness.

The first phase would launch the company, then the following phases would target influencers and mainstream consumers. Jef Holove, CEO for Eye-Fi, says the campaign specifically targeted mothers who tend to manage family photos.

TACTICS

In June 2007, Red announced that Eye-Fi would revolutionize the way photos are stored and shared, without releasing product specifics.

Then the company conducted a tour with gadget experts and consumer media in New York, San Francisco, and Washington DC to garner buzz.

RESULTS

Within 48 hours of its launch, more than 100 news stories appeared and visits to its Web site spiked to its highest rate. Within 30 days of the launch, outlets ranging from *ABC World News* to *Parents* magazine featured Eye-Fi. More than 80% of news coverage included Eye-Fi's key messages. "The thing we got most response from the media was... the ease of use," Holove says. He added that at first bloggers were skeptical of the product, but after its release, the message shifted to enthusiasm.

FUTURE

Red Consultancy remains the AOR for Eye-Fi.

Aarti Shab



Bank branch openings typically don't grab attention. So when AltaOne Federal Credit Union was expanding into Bakersfield, CA, it wanted to intrigue residents. "We

wanted to give people a reason to care," says Wendy Cleveland, VP of marketing/business development at AltaOne.

AltaOne wanted to build suspense by not announcing its name initially. After issuing an RFP, it selected Bouchard Communications Group to help give a dose of excitement.

